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American Jewry Observed

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Precaution against *pars pro toto*

A few weeks ago I came by a funny book entitled *Graffiti in the Ivy League (and thereabouts)*.⁽¹⁾ College graffiti certainly reflect specific features of student bodies. For example, a graffito in Amherst College Frost Library says, "Amherst students without Mommy and Daddy: survival rate=0." A debonair atmosphere of prep-school extension comes through. And in U. Mass Goodell Library one reads, "The guys at this school are far too blatant," and indeed some of U. Mass graffiti sound much too straightforward, such as "I am mad as hell, I can't stand it any longer" or "Lord, help us out of this dump" and below this someone added, "Help yourselves." This detached advice might be the best possible answer. "Music students are cymbal-minded"—this is a masterpiece, though rather prejudiced. I don't think it is that simple to play the cymbal. And some others require a double or triple interpretation; for instance, "This concrete sure in hell needs humanizing" could be taken firstly as an exhortation of graffiti, but also as a critique of the bleak, function-only architecture, or even of the education conducted inside. It is hard for outsiders to determine. Anyway, even before visiting Amherst, I had already had a stimulating contact with your students in the very human dimension, and this

certainly made me form an attachment to U. Mass.

I am not going to indefinitely continue an analysis of U. Mass graffiti. I took them up because the way I was imagining the U. Mass student body from those graffiti was so reminiscent of the way I had imagined American Jewry prior to my direct encounter with them. My prejudiced impression that a number of U. Mass students might be "far too blatant" had to be reconciled by my admiration of their detached and witty humor. Likewise I had to moderate some of my imaginative impressions I had formerly entertained of American Jewry. This means that I have not always been free from a popular tendency to use some conspicuous descriptions of a group as if they were true *in toto*. If I persisted in considering U. Mass students to be unmanageably blatant on account of only one graffiti, this would itself constitute blatant anti-U. Massism. If I persisted in considering American Jewry to be unmanageably intransigent on account of only one editorial of Brooklyn's *Jewish Press* insisting Hebron is ours, this would likewise constitute an egregious fallacy of taking a part as the whole.

Anti-Semitism, abstract and concrete

Speaking of graffiti, I wonder if the Anti-Defamation League or the American Jewish Committee has ever collected antisemitic graffiti all over the United States with the same ardor displayed in Warner Books series of college graffiti. The Institute of Jewish Affairs in London published *Soviet Antisemitic Propaganda* in 1978, gathering evidence from books, press and radio, but I have never heard of any antisemitic graffiti collection anywhere. Such a project might be rejected on the spot as a foregone conclusion, since enough of typical antisemitic diatribes in other forms than graffiti have been gathered, and a fully academic research on Gentile consciousness of Jews was conducted and published by two Berkeley

scholars.⁽²⁾

According to what Ben Halpern of Brandeis University defined in his essay published in *MODERN JUDAISM* magazine, "an antisemite is one for whom a tradition of hostility to 'the Jews' is activated at a high level as a major and salient element in his identity" and "an antisemitic regime or group is one hostile to 'the Jews' to the point that it cannot accept the level at which they are currently tolerated."⁽³⁾ This definition immediately connects with the Ku Klux Klan which has formed a "brothers in hate" coalition with the American neo-Nazis. I quote from Leon Uris's Klanwatch Letter, "Along with the standard KKK operations of beating peaceful black marchers, attempted synagogue bombings, hanging rabbis in effigy and the like, the Klan in Denver has spewed out thousands of pieces of hate literature, including a 64-page manual entitled *The Jews and Their Lies*." I have read about antisemites as wild animals or noxious bacteria, and also about their classical grudge against Jews as antichrists, subversive Bolsheviks, parasitic middlemen, speculators, monopolists, conspirators toward global dominion etc. But except for some graffiti and media reports of antisemitic harassment, vandalism or *faux pas* by VIPs, I had never witnessed antisemitism in action until I visited Waco, Texas with forty students of my university in summer 1979.

Through the very mysterious intercession of some international educational exchange organization, Hosei University has been affiliated with Baylor University in Waco, Texas since 1978. In view of the very progressive atmosphere of Hosei with not a few communist professors and also notorious as the headquarters of a radical New-Leftist sect, this affiliation with the extremely conservative Baptist university was a phenomenon as strange as could be. The only possible explanation for it was what Mao Tse Tung called "fan-mian-jiao-shu", a reverse teacher or a person from whose bad example one can learn. Our vice-president for academic affairs, a member of the Japan Communist Party no less, said to me, "Why not? Stu-

dents should know about various sides of America" and he was right. Living in the graffiti-free, ashtray-free and liquor-free dormitory, my students willy-nilly learned what the Baptist way of life in the Bible Belt was like, but I must add in the same breath that there was hardly any problem with the American civilization course prepared by the Baylor faculty, ranging from the U. S. Constitution, ethnic groups, women's status even to gerontology. The teachers were never shy of dealing with grave domestic issues. My students enjoyed the English lessons given by two charming ladies. The younger one's husband was a pastor of a nearby Baptist church who had much influence on Baylor students. What my students and I did not like was mandatory attendance three times a week at church services presided by that pastor, though he was very handsome, very eloquent and to any eye a great community leader.

At one such evening service we were hearing members of the congregation report one after another how their families were getting along, or ask those present to bless their daughter's wedding or to pray for their sick son. Actually I was touched by the way all the congregation was solidified under the pastor's excellent leadership. Then someone all of a sudden brought up a story about a young Jewish convert to Christianity. Alienated by his co-religionists and driven to despair, he was finally saved by turning to Christ's love. Now how would the pastor respond? "There is nothing more pitiable than the Jews shackled by the Law," he said. I could not believe my ears, but that was what he said word by word. If the Jews are shackled by the Law, by which Law? By the one which was contemporaneous with Jesus or with pre-immigration East European Jewry or with present-day American Jewry? Is he synchronizing all? If so, it is a typical anachronism.

As the leader of the summer study group which is at the same time a good-will mission group, I was of course not in a position to question him about his problematic response. I had to tell my

students instead that with all their respect toward Judaic tradition, most American Jews have been remarkably acculturated to the American way of life with liberalism as their predominant tenet. Even extremely Orthodox Jews do not take their Law as shackles. "*Kholile!* (God forbid!)" they would say. "*Shteit oif, shteit oif l'avoidas haboirai!* (Wake up, wake up to the work of our Creator!)" —with this shout of encouragement they start a day's pious life joyfully. Just as Baptists act up to their strict precepts perhaps in order to immerse themselves in Christ's love, so Orthodox Jews adhere to their numerous commandments solely with a view to immersing themselves in "*rakhamim*" (divine mercy). Why should only the Jewish Law be called shackles? If the pastor determined that there could be no equivalent of Christ's love in any other religion, he would, by his self-righteousness, violate the principle of religious pluralism which has made America what she is now. I had known that some militant and agitative religionists were generating antisemitic prejudices, but had never expected one of such prejudices to pop out of the mouth of our respected pastor whose judgment is supposed to be fair and impartial. What would become of the children who have been brought up with such biased ideas implanted deep in their psyche? Of course there are tolerant Baptists or even philosemitic Baptists, but the problem is that this pastor of ours cannot be an exceptional case. I was no longer surprised to hear later that the president of the ten-million-member Southern Baptist Convention, the Reverend Bailey Smith stated, "God does not hear the prayers of Jews."

I still repent not having met some of Jewish residents in Waco numbering 750 with their own welfare council founded as early as in 1949. I must refrain from conjecturing, but given that people generally choose the line of least resistance, especially if engaged in business, Waco Jews may have observed some conciliatory principles of their own, including how to cope with proselytizing approaches from church communities to likely peripheral Jews. I even

imagined that their leaders might have been obliged to act like traditional "*shtadlanim*" (intercessors) in order to avoid any inter-group friction. Southern hospitalities are surely extended to guests from outside, but I was able to feel an invisible wall alienating religious or political minorities inside. Our young sociology teacher at Baylor told me that when he gave a lecture on Karl Marx, students sitting toward the back started passing a note saying he is a communist. This might serve as a criterion for all the rest.

Jewish identity

I wondered if there was any frame of reference with which to compare, say, the alienated young Waco Jew "saved by turning to Christ's love" with more strictly Jewish Jews. Only if we had an all-inclusive diagram enabling us to classify any kinds of Jews! It was in Daniel Elazar's book *Community and Polity* that I came across something to serve such purpose. The author grasped American Jewry as a whole by laying "Integral Jews" as a nuclear core of seven concentric rings dispersing outward to "Participants" then to "Associated Jews", "Contributors and Consumers" then further to "Peripherals", "Repudiators" and "Quasi-Jews" as indices of commitment to Jewish values and community welfare get more tenuous and vestigial.⁽⁴⁾ These nomenclatures may need some explanation, but let it suffice to say that the hardcore "Integral Jews" living according to a Jewish rhythm account for 5 to 8 %, that is, about 300,000 to 500,000 out of 5,900,000 American Jews, and those most centrifugally dispersed three assimilationist categories run up to about 25 to 30%, that is, roughly one and half million. Elazar proved that the majority accounting for 60 to 70%, sandwiched between Jewish Jews and non-Jewish Jews and with satisfactory or just passable Jewish identity, was as a whole centripetally drawn to the magnetic core of the "Integral Jews" in face of such

grave Middle East crises as the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War. To me this all-out commitment to the defense of Israel was something to behold. I was especially touched by a story about some fund-raising occasion where a perfectly secularized Jew burst into tears as he heard the presiding rabbi intone a prayer which thanks God for letting Jews survive. This indicates that even a merely nominal, peripheral Jew is not so free from the magnetic force of Judaism, and reminds me of what Russian-Jewish Poet Osip Mandelstam wrote: "As a little bit of musk fills an entire house, so the least influence of Judaism overflows all of one's life. Oh, what a strong smell that is!"⁽⁵⁾

I had to find out why American Jewry were so deeply attached to Israel. Perhaps because of consanguinity; almost every American Jew has a relative or two in Israel. There is no textbooks of Hebrew that do not contain enthusiastic letters American Jewish students send from Israel to their parents in New York, or letters American Jewish "*olim*" (immigrants to Israel) send to their friends in America, reporting how they have adjusted themselves to their new lives in *haArets* (the homeland). Secondly, Israel is a religious symbol as the Holy Land. Jewish calendar however loosely observed, Prayer Book Hebrew however poorly memorized, the Torah however freely interpreted, rites of passage (especially *bar mitzvah*) however modified to modern taste, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob however vaguely worshipped — these are the very minimum essentials required to pass as a Jew, and all of them originated from Israel. This reminds me of what Daniel Bell wrote: "As an agnostic, one can, in rejecting religion, reject God; one may reject a supernatural or even a transcendental God. But as a Jew, how can one reject the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — without rejecting oneself?"⁽⁶⁾ Thirdly, Israel is the only nation where Jews form the majority, a tangible proof of Jewishness, a possible refuge for Diaspora Jews should emergency arise, and a source of national pride through her military, industrial as well as cultural achieve-

ments. Jews have at last ceased being a shadow people or a city people. A book on American Zionism was entitled *We Are One!*⁽⁷⁾ Some would say it is only a *halevai* (wish), but undeniably Israel has become what social psychologists call an "extended self" for the majority of American Jewry. Otherwise the political and philanthropic passion for that tiny real estate in the Middle East is just inexplicable.

I have read somewhere that philanthropic behavior has been traditionally built into Jewish "genetic code" as a surrogate for religion. This recalls to me the historical role-specialization in East European *stetlekh* (villages), where "some [learned and holy elites] who represent [Judaic] core-values are protected from too much contact with the outside, while others both at the top and bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy must go into the hostile and impure outworld, and are allowed to deviate from the norm."⁽⁸⁾ Needless to say, both in terms of living standards and prevalent values, it is a far cry between the present-day Jewish community in the United States and the pre-immigration East European *stetlekh*, and moreover Orthodoxy now, being only the Keeper of the Knowledge, "does not imply leadership, for the Orthodox do not legitimate the norms."⁽⁹⁾ Evidently "some who represent Judaic core-values" are dwindling in number, yet the age-old role-specialization seems, however modified, still alive in the American Jewish community. Orthodox and Ultraorthodox Jews might certainly annoy other more mundane coreligionists with their religious or even political intransigence. I have actually heard my Jewish friends calling them "*meshugge*" (crazy), but the acculturated majority of American Jewry remember somewhere in their psyche that in order to enjoy wealth and honor in this secular society, they have had to deviate from their Tradition, entrusting its maintenance to those Orthodox remnants who would never abandon their Yiddishkeit even in the teeth of poverty and contempt. The roof garden of wealth and *joie de vivre* has been supported by the

pillars of poverty and mortal agony; clergymen mutely devoting themselves to services and soldiers calmly sacrificing themselves for duties are here to stay as the indispensable pillars supporting happy lives of the rest. Those dwelling on the roof garden of happy life should repay those supporting the pillars, somewhere, somewhen and somehow. For the secularized bulk of American Jewry, the crises of Israel have been capital chances for such repayment, and religion as a unifying force is never so effectively in action as in such crises. By donating generously for the defense and welfare of Israel they could somehow express their solidarity not only with the Israeli brethren but also with the Judaic tradition. Nothing satisfies their Jewish conscience better. This, I think, is the secret of the magnetism stored in the core ring of the "Integral Jews".

Parallels between American Jewry and Korean residents in Japan

I have talked about Daniel Elazar's concentric rings of American Jewry mainly in terms of their solidarity with Israel and Judaic tradition. Now I would like to consider it in connection with the larger American society. What Elazar diagrammatized synchronically, Marshall Sklare expressed diachronically in terms of self-segregation, acculturation and assimilation. And this endless gradation in the choice of identity is caused by a psychic tug of war between centripetal force toward Tradition and centrifugal force toward assimilation. The psychology of assimilation is the very focus of my interest in my Jewish studies. I am a Japanese national all right, but was born from Korean father and Japanese mother, with my cultural identity perpetually hanging in suspense. This marginal-man background of mine is the very frame of reference with which I have been sizing up American Jewry. Leon Stein

of International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) says, "I think there isn't a single day, hardly a waking hour that I do not feel aware of my immigrant origins."⁽¹⁰⁾ By replacing "my immigrant origins" with "my mixed origins", the same would exactly apply to my case.

I hear that there live in New York some Americans of Korean-Japanese parentage who call themselves "Kojaps". A Kojap-American need not identify himself either with the Korean or Japanese community, because he earns his livelihood as a U. S. citizen. As well quoted, "before you could be a person, you had first to be a citizen." At least legally all U. S. citizens are equal, and this democratic principle is here to stay as the common though remote target. Marshall Sklare says, "The American Jewish attitude has generally been that antisemitism was more temporary than permanent, that antisemitism or ethnic discrimination in any form is, in fact, un-American, it violates American values, it contradicts the American creed, and in the final analysis, is subversive,"⁽¹¹⁾ and this American Jewish attitude could never have been taken without the basis of the United States citizenship. I envy their feeling of walking on the securely beaten track. Moreover, the American Jewish community is now economically an elite group with the family income index of 172%, that is, 72% above the U. S. average, and nobody doubts the American Jewish excellence in cultural and academic fields. Truman Capote's "exposé" of Jewish literary Mafia notwithstanding, Jewish experience as expressed by Jewish writers was taken, as Norman Podhoretz says, to be "more meaningful, more interesting, more relevant, more central than the experience of most other groups in our society,"⁽¹²⁾ Jewishness was no more "a burden to be overcome," but rather "an advantage to be exploited."

In Japan the background of purely Korean or Korean-Japanese parentage could be an advantage to be exploited only if one aspired to write an autobiographical novel, but otherwise it is definitely a burden to be overcome. Exercizing their civil rights to the full

advantage, American Jews have come through what Eli Ginzberg called the stages of "getting established", "moving up" and "making it".⁽¹³⁾ 700,000 Korean residents in Japan are not Japanese citizens, therefore there is no way but to live as aliens without matter-of-course privileges enjoyed by Japanese citizens. The stages of "moving up" and "making it" are extremely hard for them to enter.

There are two alternatives: the first is to confirm one's Korean identity by affiliating oneself with some political or cultural organization either of pro-ROK (South) or of pro-DPRK (North) orientation, which may entail not assuming Japanese names any longer and sending one's children to Korean day schools where girls may be ordered to wear Korean costumes, the visibility of which is about the same as Hasidic caftans in American cities other than New York. This is the path fit only for pure Koreans, as they will have to rely heavily on national pride. If a Kojap should follow this line, he would have to prove more Korean than pure Koreans, just as a Jewish friend of mine whose mother was a "*Polke*" (Polish Gentile woman) had to prove his Yiddishkeit by giving up his Ph. D. candidacy at Columbia to become a Bobover hasid.

The second alternative is to assimilate, that is, to discard one's Korean identity and become naturalized as a Japanese citizen, though only through the cumbersome processes of the law. Even in America it is not considered honorable to conceal one's ethnic identity and assimilate with the mainstream society with a properly assumed Waspish name — dishonorable because it is nothing less than deserting under the fire of prejudices and discriminations. Likewise, so long as there remain mutual hatred and contempt between the Japanese and the Koreans, it will always be dishonorable for Korean residents to japanize themselves whatever the reason, and the reason is obvious enough. Everybody wants to be free from discriminations or see to it that one's children will have a less stressful or embattled life. Some Jews were also obliged to conceal their identity through such sadly self-deceptive measures as chang-

ing names, turning Christian, living, in short, as marranos.

Either for pure Koreans or for half Koreans or for naturalized former Koreans, intermarriage and employment are where they come to realize their identity in the Japanese society, as American Jews used to and still do according to circumstances. I quote from a newspaper article by a famous Korean novelist living in Japan: "While waiting for her turn at a dentist's, my sister age 50 was addressed by a woman sitting beside her. The lady was lamenting her daughter's marriage with an American sailor, and never knowing her addressee was Korean, added that she was glad that her son-in-law was neither black nor Korean."⁽¹⁴⁾ The Koreans in Korea proper are also well aware of such Japanese prejudices and never fail to express their feeling of injury. According to a recent public opinion poll conducted by a major South Korean newspaper, the five most popular countries for the South Koreans are the U. S., Switzerland, Israel, Britain and France in order of preference. (Israel ranks third in popularity presumably because both countries are similarly overburdened with defense budgets, yet wholly dependent upon the military for national security, similarly anti-communist and considering themselves as the reliable bulwarks against the Soviet infiltration, and have similarly experienced agonies as oppressed peoples.) And the five most unpopular countries are the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Japan, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and Vietnam in order of detestation. Their hatred of North Korea is like that of the Confederacy toward the Union during the Civil War, therefore Japan is the most detested foreign country. Countries and peoples are never same, but the Koreans' hatred against Japan is all the more implacable because they are hated and despised by the Japanese even before they hate Japan. This might also sound familiar to Jewish ears.

I have no available statistics of intermarriage rate among Korean residents in Japan. I know that one out of three American

Jews intermarry now ; such is obviously not the case among the Koreans in Japan. Cases of intermarriage between Korean males and Japanese females are not uncommon, but Japanese males rarely take Korean females as their spouses. From what I told you about the mutual hatred and contempt, it could easily be imagined that a case of Korean-Japanese intermarriage is anything but a matter for unreserved congratulation to the families concerned. Passionate love would enable the intermarrying couple to stand trials, such as fierce resistance from parents, but in all likelihood they would not consider as far as what would befall their offsprings to be born as Kojaps. In the extremely unfavorable social atmosphere where intermarriage with a Korean is as deplorable as that with a black, it is natural that grown-up Kojaps should often disappear into the general population once they are accepted as its members, though they could never avoid being labeled "half-breed". Kojaps fully understand the cruel predicament in which Jewish-German "Mischlinge" were placed under the Nazi rule.

The rest of the story including their psychic structures has been mercilessly laid bare in what Sociologists Everett Stonequist⁽¹⁵⁾ and Robert E. Park⁽¹⁶⁾ wrote on the marginal man. Indeed, reading their treatises on the marginal men as persons of mixed origins is, at least for me, like listening to a master fortune-teller whose every word sounds ominously true. My life history, which used to be a jealously guarded secret only to be revealed to the best of my friends, is now a mere old hat. According to Park, a person of my kind "is condemned by fate to live in two social worlds at the same time, and the opposition between groups is incorporated in him as inner conflict. He is often confused. He sees himself from the standpoint of the dominant group and develops an inferiority complex. Traits commonly found in the marginal man include ambivalence, excessive self-consciousness, restlessness, hypersensitivity, moodiness and lack of self-confidence. He has doubts about his role in many situations ; he is unsure of the relationships to his friends

and fear their rejection. He is often lonely and spend much time daydreaming. He sees life as a bad experience and have difficulty in enjoying himself. He is highly critical of other people and feel that they treat him unjustly."⁽¹⁷⁾ In short, he is supposed to be neurotic. As Shibutani and Kwak rightly points out in their book *Ethnic Stratification*, "Park failed to differentiate between being in a marginal position and the development of personality disorders, which are not necessarily connected,"⁽¹⁸⁾ but I would hasten to add that on condition of replacing "disorders" with "traits", both are not necessarily unconnected, either. Traits often found in persons of mixed origins could be found even in persons of legitimately "pure" ancestry who have found themselves in a marginal position. This is how my case connects with that of the Jews.

If Kojaps in Japan had tried to identify too completely with the dominant Japanese society, and in spite of their efforts had been rejected by it, they might have developed neurotic traits. Numerically too few to organize themselves, and temperamentally too unenterprising to take any public action, Kojaps would hardly have enough nerve to lay claim to equal treatments or rather to stand by the Korean minority group which represents half of their blood. European Jews in their respective host countries had also experienced similar cycles of assimilative trials and alienation, but without falling into political lethargy or much less becoming neurotic, many espoused the Zionist or Bundist cause to live fully as Jews. This is what might be least expected of Kojaps for the numerical and temperamental reasons just mentioned above. Jews could still be Jewish nationalists, but Kojaps by definition could never be Japanese or Korean nationalists. Therefore it would be more with Jews in sparsely Jewish circumstances or offsprings of Jewish-Gentile intermarriage that Kojaps have something in common.

One of my problems was that I have had to represent two different and incongruous reference groups. Where standards and interests conflict, it is impossible to satisfy both. Before my Japanese

friends I do not hesitate to be critical of the Japanese discriminatory practices toward the Koreans, and before my Korean friends I persuade them not to suspect anti-Koreanism where it does not exist actually, adding that their very suspiciousness makes themselves disagreeable to their neighbors. When the American interests do not harmonize with those of Israel, American Jews would also find it hard to satisfy both sides. Jewish lobbyists in Washington have tried to translate the Israeli interests into those of the U. S. on the assumption that Israel is a moral cause consonant with American democratic ideals, but if the gap between morality and power should widen in Israeli policies, at least some American Jews would find themselves at a loss how to retain their loyalty to Israel. Moreover, other ethnic groups are on the alert to see whether Jewish citizens are really giving higher priority to the U. S. interests than to those of Israel.

I tend to be also sensitive to overly ethnocentric or nationalistic attitudes taken either by the Japanese or Korean government. I am interested in politics, but have never thought of entering the political arena where only people with nationalistic conviction can be in their element. Anyway in Japan the gates to public service, mass media and large corporations are closed to alien residents including those Japanese citizens whose real fathers are alien. During the job-hunting season, private inquiry agencies are in full swing to smell out any applicant of suspicious background. If a Korean student had a clear aptitude for and strong ambition in administrative fields, all he has to do is polish up his Korean and return to Korea for a stiff but free competition. It has hardly been possible for Koreans or aliens for that matter to be appointed as tenured faculty members of national universities, but the doors to private university faculties are not entirely closed, and for the time being the thing to be is an academic for those of whole or partial Korean ancestry in Japan, unless endowed with special talent in arts, sports, entertainment or with wizardry in business.

Academics everywhere are generally insensitive to ethnic identity, and sympathetic to the cause of downtrodden peoples. Academics of marginal origins never withdraw but actually advance into a life of scholarship. Their often perfectionist standards would demand compulsive dedication which might lead to a new form or theory or whatever contribution that enrich the lives of men. And this ideal for marginal-man academics has been most brilliantly fulfilled by Jewish scholars in a wide variety of fields. I think I am pursuing Jewish studies mainly in order to find out what aspects of Jewish historical experience are viable models from which others might also learn. Perhaps I have taken too much time in explaining my own frame of reference, which I hope has not been purposeless, though, because it has evidently cut across Jewish experience on a number of spots.

Particularism vs universalism

Born with a built-in inclination to doubt any form of ethnocentrism, I find it hard to make a special exception for any form of nationalism. I fully understand that every nation needs a healthy nationalism to solidify and elevate its people. Every nation lives not only by facts but also by imagination, which in this case stands for communal illusions derived from culture-specific or society-specific values. But there is no guarantee that such communal illusions will never run amuck. This is why we sometimes become frightened of the concept of "national character." It connects at a moment's notice with national separatism, which easily swells to the consciousness of communal destiny with an invariable support of religions and myths. Such tendency toward national separation has historically served as a familiar and always effective way for State power to start full national mobilization at times of crisis, for better or worse.

The trouble in any such upsurge of nationalism is that State power is obliged to effect national solidification through age-old rituals of sacrifice with proper scapegoats whom the general public are encouraged to hate. Chosen for this purpose were those marginal elements who could not pledge whole-hearted allegiance to the nation's polity and community for whatever reason. During the Great Earthquake of 1923, for example, the Japanese authorities spread false propaganda that Koreans were randomly setting fire and throwing poison into wells, thus effecting usually unjustifiable arrests and then massacres of a great many Koreans and also of Japanese socialist dissidents. At least 7,000 Korean residents are said to have been slaughtered by soldiers and vigilantes. Such pogrom stories, however, were no more than annual occurrences in histories of European Jews. Politically dissident and religiously heretical, the Jews were the most readily identifiable minority, and therefore were always the first to be immolated. This gave rise to a long, long series of massive emigration from Central and East European countries to eventually form the bulk of what is now called American Jewry.

What Jewish radical thinkers wrote about the negation of State could never be understood without pondering on the meaning of crossing the border with barely acquired visas, and of thereafter having themselves registered as aliens. And this uprootedness was accompanied by another kind of crossing the border, that is, out of the ghetto into the world of enlightenment. There occurred a take-off from particularism to universalism, which was extremely productive of those cultural giants referred to as "non-Jewish Jews" by Isaac Deutscher, such as Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, Freud etc. All of them were Jews, and stood on the borderline between different cultures and religions. They also found themselves on turning points in history. None of them lived in the stable centers but in the outskirts of their respective societies, where cultures alien to each other could influence and nurture each

other. Each of them belonged to some nation or other, but was never accepted as its full member. With a penetrating insight only a marginal person could have of the relativity of all values, they started searching for a new, wider intellectual horizon. They defied any *idée fixe*, and fought against any influence that tried to have ideas and realities fixed. They analyzed all traditionally fixed ideas and realities into universally applicable structures, thereby teaching all the world that in the nature of things there is no essential difference between peoples, and that Jews or any other pariahs are as fully human as any pure "Aryans." The fate of Jews was never separate from the fate of all men.

I enthusiastically wished that the Jews as experts on all manners of nationalistic follies and injustices would help me find out something to live and struggle for. For me those intellectual giants whom Deutscher called "non-Jewish Jews" represented Jewish prophetic justice most dramatically, and therefore were most Jewish of Jews. I will never cease cherishing this paradox. Jews will be respected first and foremost on account of those great non-Jewish Jewish thinkers, scientists, poets, novelists, artists and composers, at least among secular Gentiles. I used to think and cannot still refrain from thinking that Jews are intrinsically negaters of State power. I know that things changed greatly with the establishment of Medinat Israel, but Jews upholding State power still look to me like an irrevocably mutated species hard to communicate with.

I am fully aware that I cannot stop my talk here, because these non-Jewish Jewish intellectual astronauts on their spacewalk were not severed from the umbilical cords connecting them with the vessel, that is, Judaic core values. Now I have neither time nor competence to illustrate these fascinating cases of cross-cultural psychic combination, but let me take an example out of American Jewish writers. Compared with Bashevis-Singer and Malamud, Saul Bellow is a writer capable of writing on non-Jewish themes, and my impression had been that Bellow's Jewishness was not so thick.

Later through several reference books, I learned that even in his "goyish" novels one could detect Jewish influences, for example, a Hasidic type of passion in *Henderson the Rain King* etc. But more than anything, while reading his travelogue *To Jerusalem and Back* I was amazed to find out he had been almost "born again" after immersing himself in some mystical aura of Jerusalem. And I already mentioned how I was touched to realize that any crisis affecting the existence of Israel would never fail to cause among the bulk of secular Jewish Americans a spiritual convergence toward some center of Judaic tradition.

Let me revert again to Daniel Elazar's concentric rings. From my Kojap point of view, the most outwardly dispersed assimilationist without any traditional counterweight is still a kite whose string is let very loose, for no human being can really lead a self-respecting life if he is afraid to look at and understand himself. When U. S. citizens visit Japan, they are treated just as Americans, be they German or Irish or Polish or Jewish. But in the United States every American is a hyphenated person, something else at the same time. Assimilation as a form of mask-wearing entails repression of ethnic identity, and such repression demands some compensation or other later. E. H. Erikson gave an unforgettable example of a shtetl-born American businessman who successfully assimilated into the mainstream society by eliminating every Judaic vestige from his life, and on retiring, suffered from an unidentified psychosomatic syndrome which made his declining years even more miserable.⁽¹⁹⁾ The Dreyfus Affair and above all the Holocaust have dealt decisive blows on optimistic assimilationism, thereby corroborating the Zionist orientation in Jews all the world over. As in any other nationalism, Zionism has resorted to the unifying force of religious tradition in times of crisis, and this tendency has taken root more deeply in America where dispersed Jewish citizens need a center more urgently than in Israel where all the people should willy-nilly present a united front so far as their national security is concerned.

With such a rising tide of ethnicity, the wearing of yarmulka's indoors and outdoors became a symbol of Jewish solidarity, even among not so traditional Jewish boys. Catching this current of the times, Professor Eugene Borowitz of Hebrew Union College wrote a book entitled *The Mask Jews Wear*, comparing the Jewish tendency of camouflaging their identity with the caucasoid-looking black's desire to pass as a white. He further contrasted three Jewish conductors of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra : Gustav Mahler was inauthentic because he converted to Catholicism in order to make his way into the cultural life of Vienna. Bruno Walter was a "walking lie" because "he hoped that if he avoided anything Jewish, people would eventually forget he was a Jew,"⁽²⁰⁾ and Borowitz senses the same sort of strategy in Admiral Hyman Rickover, father of atomic-powered submarines. Only Leonard Bernstein is healthy because "it seemed quite natural for him to utilize Hebrew texts and chant in his First Symphony."⁽²¹⁾

My marginal-man viewpoint repels that of Borowitz. I doubt if one's mode of accommodation to ethnic tradition could be the only or even major criterion on which to judge someone is inauthentic or mendacious or healthy, in short, to measure one's integrity. Such concept of Jewishness is too parochial to be acceptable, even reminiscent of Samuel Johnson's definition of patriotism (i.e. as "the last refuge of a scoundrel"). One's satisfactory or unsatisfactory mode of accommodation to Jewish milieu depends to a great extent on where, when and how one lived. Not all Jews live in New York. It is only human to live like a marrano in Catholic Vienna, and if the man, who had lived as a marrano in Nazified Berlin, acted suddenly like an "integral Jew" in New York, I would doubt his integrity. I would rather base Bernstein's health on that bravura on the podium than on his use of Hebrew texts and chant. Borowitz overlooked a more important point, that is, whether Bernstein's work with Hebrew texts in it had a universal appeal or not. Referring to Bernstein's Kaddish Symphony dedicated to President Kennedy,

British Critic Colin Wilson wrote: "Kennedy was accident-prone, but nothing quite as bad as this overtook him while he was alive."⁽²²⁾ The final choral part of Mahler's Second Symphony "Resurrection" was translated into Hebrew, and performed as a part of the "Ha-Tikvah on Mt. Scopus" Concert⁽²³⁾ in 1967 under the direction of Bernstein. The German choral text by Klopstock and Mahler had to be literally resurrected in Hebrew fifty-six years after the composer's death because of the excellence of the music itself, where lies the intrinsic and therefore universal value.

The American pluralistic society is like a rubic cube: when it is functioning, colors intermingle on each of its six sides, and when it comes to rest, same colors slide effortlessly into place on each side. Except for Orthodox Jews, almost all Jewish Americans have also had to behave as "outgroup Joes" or "ingroup Jews" as occasion demands. Conservative and Reform Judaism owe their rise to the overwhelming wish on the part of the majority of American Jewry to retain full privileges as the U.S. citizen as well as their Jewish identity. While intermingling with fellow citizens of various ethnic origins especially in sparsely Jewish religious, ethnic or regional situations, it will not always be advantageous or easy to retain one's Jewish identity, much less to separate oneself and build up a voluntary cultural ghetto. I certainly agree with Borowitz that it is absurd to really try to pass as a member of the so-called mainstream group, because, as Sklare points out, all such efforts have historically failed as witnessed by Ethical Culture Movement or various Leftist movements, and also because "if Jews assimilate, they enter into a group that is not superior to their own group."⁽²⁴⁾ But it is much too reminiscent of Puritan censorship to take one's mode of accommodation to religious tradition as indicative of one's personality. Such censorial mood would suffocate a serious writer who tries to grasp personal emotions exactly as they function. On account of the "unhealthy" Jewish complexes as exposed in *Portnoy's Complaints*, Philip Roth was flooded with complaints about Portnoy.

I cannot agree with Arthur Koestler, either, when he asserts that because Judaism is based on national separation and bound to create social tension, Jews have either to assimilate into their host countries or to settle down in Israel. He is very clear-cut, but not realistic at all. He deprives Jews of an inalienable human right to act contradictorily and inconsistently. He demands that colors of a rubic cube should be same on each side.

Debates on the Holocaust — another case of particularist-universalist conflict

It is a cinch that any debates on the Holocaust would precipitate the familiar conflict between particularist and universalist perspectives. Any attempts to equalize Gentile victims of genocides with Jewish martyrs of the Holocaust would run into vigorous resistance from quite a few Jews especially of theological orientation. They would relate the Holocaust with some transcendental, non-interactional, not-history-specific, "pure" reasons, thus jealously cherishing an *idée fixe* of the Holocaust as something particularly Jewish. According to Theologian Emil L. Fackenheim, "the Nazi murder of Jews was an 'ideological' project; it was annihilation, murder for the sake of murder, evil for the sake of evil."⁽²⁵⁾ In other words, the Nazis singled out Jews as devils to be extinguished "idealistically," that is, without any human, if evil, motives. Such visionary proposition on the Holocaust would oblige secular Gentiles to stand in silent awe at the tragedies, of which only the Jews appear to be privileged to fathom the profundity. A more tangible and comprehensible counterstatement had to come out from the camp of social scientists so that Jewish martyrdom could be linked to the universal history of human misery in our times. Irving Louis Horowitz's essay entitled "Many Genocides, One Holocaust?"⁽²⁶⁾ was such a timely attempt which must have

roused an answering thrill in those sympathetic Gentiles whose access had been frustrated by an invisible wall of religious mystification. I was naturally tempted to try his idea on my Ulpan (Hebrew course) teacher and classmates.

Our Hebrew lessons always started from the question "*Ma asita etmol* (What did you do yesterday)?" When my turn came, I spoke as follows, "*Profesor sheli shalakh li monografia shelo al shoah. Karati oto be-hitanyenut gdola, ve-himshakhti likhtov skira alav ad chamesh ba-boker. Ha-profesor omer she-ze lo nakhon lir'ot korvanot ihudim ka-mashehu meiukhad. Hu omer she-korvanot ha-shoah domim le-korvanot kambodiaim, ugandaim ve-gam iapanim (bi-meiukhad shel Hiroshima), ki kulam hem korvanot shel koakh medinai.*" (My professor sent me his monography on the Holocaust. I read it with great interest, and continued writing a review on it until five in the morning. The professor tells that it is not right to consider Jewish victims of the Holocaust as something special, and that they are like Cambodian, Ugandan and Japanese victims (especially of Hiroshima) because both the former and the latter are victims of State power.) The teacher, a young Israeli lady, mentally quick and not unattractive, stood up with her chin set, repeated what I spoke so that everybody might grasp it, and asked one by one if he or she would agree with what Kohno or his professor said. An ominous growl occurred from nowhere. At first the class tried to speak in Hebrew, but in a matter of several minutes burst into tirades in pure American English, "Disturbing! — Did you see TV movie "Holocaust"? — They killed even babies — What other people were taken by train to special camps for extermination? — Hiroshima could have been avoided if the Japanese had known better — Is your professor a Jew?" etc. To the teacher's question "*Ata maskim/at maskima* (Do you agree)?" everybody said "*Lo* (No)!" "*Kohno, ata maskim?*" "*Ken, be-vadai* (Yes, of course)." But neither my Hebrew nor my guts were strong enough to effectively maintain my lone position against such united opposition.

At least I could have informed them of the ratios of the Armenian and East European Jewish victims to the respective whole populations (50% and 60%), or could have pointed out that by insisting on the incomparable specialty of Jewish sufferings they would contravene the very pluralistic principle on which they survive, or just simply that since every nation holds its own history of sufferings as most special, it would be purposeless to emphasize the absolute specialty of the Holocaust. "History is not democratic; it does not assign equal import to like events" said Henry Feingold in *SHOAH* Spring 1981 issue. This sounds to be effective in maintaining the uniqueness of the Holocaust, because who can objectively deny that the Holocaust is extremely important in world history? But I scent in the above quotation an overemphasis on European history with Judeocentric interpretation thereof, and a concomitant undue slight upon histories in other parts of the world. It is not value-free "History" but value-bound historians that "does not assign equal import to like events." History can be made indefinitely more equitable and democratic.

On the day following the Ulpan lesson I attended a YIVO seminar on the Bund activities around the turn of the century, and afterwards at a nearby restaurant happened to meet the speaker of the day, an Israeli Ph.D. candidate at UCLA. He wore a green ribbon in sympathy for the young Black victims in Atlanta. When I told him about what happened in the Ulpan classroom the previous day, he said snappily, "They are monopolizing sufferings!" His idea was exactly mine. So I encountered two kinds of Jews, one at the Zionist Ulpan, and the other at YIVO, where by the way I witnessed a few more wearing green ribbons; namely Hebrew side (Judeocentric particularism) and Yiddish side (interpariah-conscious cosmopolitanism) of the Jews, and I was very happy to find the latter in a young Israeli scholar. Of course I do not intend to classify Jews into such simplistic categories. My point is just that some Jews are of more "Hebrew" than "Yiddish" orientation, and

vice versa in others.

Every man is a split personality with his head filled with integral and imaginary numbers, the latter of which cannot be slighted because of the possibility of being connected with the former via complex number. These mathematical concepts could be expressed in chemical terms such as ferrous and phosphorous. Both elements coexist in various ratios and interact with each other in every person or even culture. Take Marxist culture: it ranges from the officially approved Soviet propaganda literature (ferrous all right but bleakly rigid) to Herbert Marcuse (phosphorous but not even luminescent in a dark nightmarish labyrinth), and in between enter optimistic-constructive or pessimistic-decadent varieties, though the latter gets banned as likely as not. Also as to Jewish culture, a similar ferrous-phosphorous spectrum could be hinted especially for the political and religious situations, though infinitesimally splintered positions would entail an endless classification.

Such spectra remind one of the Jungian classification of creative impulses ranging from progressive (toward consciousness — realist/materialist) to regressive (toward subconscious — mystic/visionary). If applied to attitudes toward the Holocaust, this spectrum would range from Horowitz (progressive) to Fackenheim (regressive minus) to Satmarer Rebbe Teitelbaum (regressive plus). While treating the causes of the same subject, the “progressive” champion tries to do in the sphere of social sciences what an etiologist does — detecting pathogens with the hope that his discovery will bring an effective cure and prevent recurrence; and the latter two on the “regressive” side, unsatisfied with apparently limited scientific findings, tend to see things whole, trying to intuitively reach the heart of the matter by dint of sweepingly dichotomic metaphors. They try to see things whole all right, but so long as their *idée fixe* is Jews as the Chosen people, their standpoint cannot but be Judeocentric, not Copernican but Ptolemaic, and the more “regressively” predisposed a Jewish religionist is, the more fervent and purer his

Messianism grows, thus the Satmarer leader Teitelbaum is driven to describe the deaths of the six million Jews as due punishment for their sin, that is, deviation from Jewishness. Such vision of being Chosen for death begets fatalist, and even masochist ideas, which depict Jews as an entirely powerless people unable to do anything aggressive, "a threat only to the Nazi mind." To crystallize anti-Semitism into something ubiquitous and outside human control, even Nazis are considered devoid of "passions unleashed by the war." This is, as Horowitz pointed out, really a case of "fitting peoplehood into theories"⁽²⁷⁾ and not otherwise.

The problem is that an etiologist can also be a religious person, and actually possesses a whole progressive-regressive spectrum inside himself; however dormant his regressive impulses may lie usually. This inactive volcano in the psyche has to do with whatever may be referred to as unconscious religiousness, which could be activated by any stimuli from outside as we saw before. Thus particularist-universalist dichotomy is just a myth, and it is not unusual that the most enlightened Jew, a paragon advocate of internal and international democracy, could suddenly turn Judeo-centric according to circumstances. It is on such occasions that we witness a change of tune just like a Möbius loop twisting through 180 degrees. Only a better understanding of Jewish history could keep us from being shocked by all the metamorphic feats Woody Allen acted in his film "Zelig" (its Japanese version was entitled "Chameleon Man"). Needless to say, such metamorphic feats are not "particularly Jewish," but shared by the rest of the human species. In this case, too, Jews are like any other peoples, but only more so.

Epilogue — Jewish role in the American pluralistic society

America is charming first of all because of her inter-ethnic,

inter-racial, inter-religious breeding which promotes comprehensive, liberal and pluralistic tolerance. America as a whole oscillates between the ideal of national integration and the reality of ethnic divisions. Ethnic groups are divided because of social inequalities as well as for the purpose of maintaining ethnic traditions. American pluralism entitles ethnic groups to sustain their respective cultures and to confront inequalities, but at the same time obligates them to respect the welfare of the entire American society. In establishing the equilibrium between right and duty, between particularism and universalism, American Jews have displayed outstanding creativity and leadership. Now I understand why the American Jewish Committee should have a wing known as Institute of Human Relations, and why the Anti-Defamation League should also put up a doorplate which reads Institute for Human Rights and Peace. The same traditional considerations for universal, supra-ethnic interests which sometimes demand a willing suspension of Jewishness, could be detected in the attitudes of Jewish intellectuals working for media, publishers and of course in the three Federal branches.

As I told you in connection of Daniel Elazar's concentric rings, the American Jewish community still consists of some who are devoted to Jewish core-values, and others who go into hostile and impure outworld, at least from the Orthodox point of view. Then who functions as a bridge between the former and the latter? Very symbolical are those Jewish scholars who have plied, say, between Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary. I mean those scholars who are fully awakened to and fully concerned about Jewish identity, never satisfied with easy compromises with the mainstream society, and try to elucidate unjustifiable social structures and unreasonable social conventions by means of their inherent cross-cultural perspective and universal rationalism. This is a genuinely positive marginal man, entirely different from a negative marginal man who is called a "*kvetch*" (whiner) in Yiddish. In his brilliant epilogue to *World of Our Fathers*, Irving Howe

wrote: "Their greatest contribution has been less what America has accepted than what it has resisted."⁽²⁸⁾ I mean those social critics and activists who have never been free from an ambivalent impulse to be particularist-cum-universalist, and therefore are all the better able to grasp and reflect those moral turmoils occasioned by intergroup or international contacts or conflicts. Only people with such mentality could apply subtly devised variations of Hillel's Golden Rule to the entangled situations in the pluralistic American society and also in the Middle East. This accounts for my ever increasing interest in and respect for the Jewish intellectual tradition which has produced a number of those great personalities who are self-assignedly conscious of, and life-givingly constructive toward the task of making our future less ghastly — not only for the Jews but also for all the world.

NOTES

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- (1) Published by Warner Books, 1981
- (2) cf. Quinley, Harold E. & Glock, Charles Y.: *Anti-Semitism in America*, The Free Press, 1979.
- (3) Halpern, Ben: "What Is Antisemitism?", *MODERN JUDAISM* Vol. 1, No. 3, December 1981, p. 260.
- (4) Elazar, Daniel J.: *Community and Polity—the Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry*, the Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976, pp. 70-77.

- (5) As quoted in Howe, Irving: *World of Our Fathers*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976, p. 644.
- (6) Bell, Daniel: "Reflections on Jewish Identity", in Rose, Peter I.(ed.): *The Ghetto and Beyond*, p. 466.
- (7) Urofsky, Melvin I.: *We Are One!: American Jewry and Israel*, Double day, 1978.
- (8) Zenner, Walter: "Censorship and Syncretism: Some Social Anthropological Approaches to the study of Middle Eastern Jews" in Talmage, Frank(ed.): *Studies in Jewish Folklore*, Association for Jewish Studies, 1980, p. 388.
- (9) Klausner, Samuel Z.: "Four Sociologies of American Jewry: Methodological Notes", in Gittler, Joseph B.(ed.): *Jewish Life in the U. S.—Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, New York University Press, 1981, p. 225.
- (10) Wilcox, Desmond: *Americans*, Delacorte Press, 1978, p. 217.
- (11) Sklare, Marshall: "Acculturation and Jewish Identity", in Rosen, Gladys (ed.): *Jewish Life in America—Historical Perspectives*, KTAV Publishing House, 1978, p. 179.
- (12) Podhoretz, Norman: "The Rise and Fall of the American Jewish Novelist," in Rosen(ed.): *op. cit.*, p. 144.
- (13) Ginzberg, Eli: "Jews in the American Economy: The Dynamics of Opportunity," in Rosen(ed.): *op. cit.*, pp. 111-4.
- (14) Kim, Dalsoo: "Nikkan Toronkai Hiraite-mitara? (How about Holding a Japanese-Korean Forum?)", *The Yomiuri Shimbun* (Evening), February 4, 1982.
- (15) cf. especially Chapters V & VI of Stonequist, Everett V.: *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Cultural Conflict*, Russell & Russell, 1961.
- (16) cf. especially Part IV of Park, Robert Ezra: *Race and Culture*, The Free Press, 1950.
- (17) As summarized in Shibutani T. & Kwan K. M.: *Ethnic Stratification: A Comparative Approach*, The MacMillan Company, 1965, p. 356.
- (18) *ibid.*
- (19) cf. Erikson, Erik H.: "Identity and Uprootedness in Our time" contained as Chapter 3 in *Insight and Responsibility*, W. W. Norton & Company

Inc., 1964.

- (20) Borowitz, Eugene: *The Mask Jews Wear*, Sh'ma paperback edition, 1980, p. 37.
- (21) *ibid.*, p. 38.
- (22) Wilson, Colin: *On Music*, PAN Books, 1967, p. 236.
- (23) HaTikvah means "the hope" and is also the title of the Israeli national anthem.
- (24) Sklare, *op. cit.* p. 183.
- (25) Fackenheim, Emil L.: *God's Presence in History*, Harper Torchbooks, 1972, p. 70.
- (26) Published in *MODERN JUDAISM*, Vol.1, No. 1, May 1981.
- (27) Horowitz, Irving Louis: *op. cit.*, p. 84.
- (28) Howe: *op. cit.*, p. 646.